

Agricultural Marketing Service
Fruit and Vegetable Division
Fresh Products Branch
Agricultural Commodity Technician (Fresh F&V)
GS-1981-5

SJ FV38

I. INTRODUCTION

This position is located in a Field Office of the Fruit and Vegetable Division, Fresh Products Branch, Agricultural Marketing Service. The incumbent assists Agricultural Commodity Graders in performing inspection and grading work on fresh fruits, vegetables, and related products at various terminal market sites such as warehouses, railroad sidings, packing plants, and similar facilities. Assignments may involve details or reassignment to a different geographical area as determined by management. This is a bridge position. The employee performs duties designed to provide knowledge of grading and inspection concepts, methods, and practices as well as to acquaint the employee with Division and Branch procedures. Training involves both formal instruction and on-the-job training.

II. MAJOR DUTIES

Under general supervision, selects representative samples from product lots in accordance with prescribed sampling procedures and plans. Determines when selection is satisfactory or if a larger sample is required. Carries out phases of inspection such as sampling and records results.

Performs case stamping and checkloading functions.

Prepares grading worksheets and records inspection and grading results as dictated by the Grader.

While observing grading work, receives instructions on new or changing procedures.

Applies instructional material, official standards, and related regulations which govern the sampling, grading, and certification of less complex fruits and vegetables for "condition only".

III. FACTORS

Factor 1. Knowledge Required by the Position

Knowledge of fruits and vegetables and their characteristics as well as established standards and regulations relating to their grading and inspection.

Ability to maintain interpersonal relationships with industry personnel.

Ability to apply well-established methods and procedures to conduct routine sampling and grading for "condition only" on less complex commodities.

Factor 2. Supervisory Controls

The Officer-In-Charge or designated Grader provides the assignments; routine assignments are carried out without explicit instructions or close supervision. Recurring routine technical problems are resolved on the basis of previous experience without reference to supervisor. Problems or questions on unusual situations or conflicts are referred to the supervisor or higher graded employee. Completed work is reviewed for accuracy and conformance to instructions.

Factor 3. Guidelines

Written guidelines include parts of the official grade standards, regulations, visual aids, instructional training material, technical manuals, and other written guidelines provided locally. Deviations from guidelines or new assignments are further explained to the employee.

Factor 4. Complexity

The work involves following methods and procedures which are closely related. The technical factors necessary to consider are usually made relatively apparent and are readily verified. Variations in the work stem primarily from the particular type of fruit or vegetable being sampled or graded, and it may be necessary for the Technician to make procedural readjustments.

Factor 5. Scope and Effect

The work involves the study of fruit and vegetable related materials such as reference guides and official standards and procedures. The Technician performs sampling, checkloading, lot stamping, and "condition only" inspections on less complex commodities. Any technical work performed affects the accuracy and reliability of the work performed by the Graders.

Factor 6. Personal Contacts

Contacts are primarily with Graders and fruit and vegetable wholesalers, handlers, and their employees.

Factor 7. Purpose of Contacts

Contacts with industry employees are to obtain cooperation in facilitating sampling, checkloading, and lot stamping work.

Factor 8. Physical Demands

Fruit and vegetable sampling, checkloading, and lot stamping requires periods of physical exertion to lift and move boxes and cartons of product often weighing more than 50 pounds. Physical coordination and manual dexterity are necessary to perform examination of products and to safely enter and leave rail cars, trailers, and trucks. Ability is required to detect abnormalities in the commodity through normal or corrected vision in at least one eye for distance, depth perception, and color. The employee must be able to insure safety in a highly mechanized or noisy environment through adequate or correctable hearing. The incumbent must have the ability to determine product quality through smell and taste when necessary.

Factor 9. Work Environment

The work environment includes exposure to adverse outdoor weather; working in refrigerated areas; and exposure to fumes and odors from coolants.